

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PONTA 00259 190321Z

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S E C R E T PONTA DELGADA 0259

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4

TAGS: PINT, PO

REF: PONTA DELGADA 257 (NOTAL)

SUBJ: AZOREAN SITUATION; CONVERSATION WITH LTC MIRANDA.

1. LTC MIRANDA CAME TO SEE ME JULY 16. HE WAS CONCERNED ABOUT AFM DECISION TO ESTABLISH DIRECT LINKS WITH PEOPLE, A PATTERN HE SAID COPIED FROM CUBA. HE OPINED THAT CURRENT PATH OF GOP WILL LEAD EITHER TO CIVIL WAR OR COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP. MIRANDA STATED THAT HE PERSONALLY DOES NOT FAVOR INDEPENDENCE AND BELIEVES MOST AZOREANS WOULD PREFER TO BE PORTUGUESE, HOWEVER A COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT IN LISBON WOULD PROVOKE AZOREAN INDEPENDENCE. AZOREANS WANT POLITICAL AUTONOMY IN A PORTUGAL GOVERNED BY THE PPD AND/ OR THE PS. MIRANDA DESCRIBED HIS OWN POLITICAL ORIENTATION AS BEING BETWEEN THE PPD AND THE PS. HE SAID THAT WITH SOME EXCEPTIONS IN THE AIR FORCE AND NAVY, THE MILITARY IN THE AZORES ARE MODERATES.

2. MIRANDA INFORMED ME THAT MILITARY GOVERNOR GENERAL PINTO DE MAGALHAES WILL BE NAMED PRESIDENT OF AN AZOREAN WIDE GOVERNING JUNTA AND THAT MAGALHAES HAD ASKED MIRANDA TO BE THE CIVIL GOVERNOR FOR THE PONTA DEL GADA DISTRICT. MIRANDA IS RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT THE POST BECAUSE HE DOES NOT KNOW IF HE HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE POEPL. HE WOULD LIKE TO RETURN TO THE CONTINENT WHERE

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SECRET

PAGE 02 PONTA 00259 190321Z

HE OWNS A HOUSE AND HIS WIFE HAS A FARM. HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN,

CHO ARE IN LISBON FOR THE SUMMER, ARE CONTINENTALS AND HE HAS NOTHING IN THE AZORES. BUT HE ADDED THAT THE MEN AND OFFICERS OF HIS BATTALION DO NOT WANT HIM TO LEAVE THE AZORES, THEY ARE AFRAID HE MIGHT BE ARRESTED ON THE CONTINENT.

3. COMMENT: MIRANDA, THE POPULAR AZOREAN BORN COMMANDER OF BATTALION EIGHTEEN AND THE OFFICER ON SAO MIGUEL WITH TROOPS, IS OBVIOUSLY A KEY FIGURE IN ANY INDEPENDENCE MOVE. ALTHOUGH EXTREMELY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE OF PORTUGAL, AND CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE AZORES, HE HAS NOT DECIDED TO COMMIT HIS FUTURE TO THE SE ISLANDS. I DOUBT THAT ANYTHING SHORT OF A COMMUNIST DICTATORSHIP IN PORTUGAL COULD PROVOKE MIRANDA TO CAST HIS LOT WITH THE SEPARATIST.

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